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NATO staffer defects to East

By Reuters

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A secretary who worked at the Brussels headquarters of the NATO alliance has defected to East Germany, the official East German news agency ADN announced April 9.

The secretary, a Belgian woman named only as I. Verrept, arrived in East Germany April 8. According to the news agency, she worked at NATO's International Secretariat and had access to several hundred secret NATO plans. ADN said she had asked for asylum on grounds of conscience because of the "danger of NATO policy."

It quoted her as saying such policies included the North Atlantic Treaty Organization's decision last December to produce and deploy new medium-range nuclear missiles in Western Europe aimed at the Soviet Union.

In March last year, another NATO secretary who defected to East Germany caused a sensation when she claimed in a television interview that she knew details of alliance military alert plans.